

DANNY DeVITO may be Hollywood's comic prince of darkness but, underneath, he's just a big cuddly teddy bear.

"Sure I like to think of myself as a romantic guy and I still give Rhea flowers," the star says of his relationship with his wife, actress Rhea Perlman, who stars as barmaid Carla in the TV series Cheers.

Danny, 47, is usually the sleazeball on screen but it's the opposite in real life.

Five feet (1.5 m) short, Danny is one of the tallest men in Hollywood right now, with a string of hit movies under his belt, as actor and director, and he's riding high again with another hit, *Other People's Money*.

Danny plays Lawrence Garfield, whose main loves in life are donuts, the violin, a computer and other people's money.

On Wall Street, he is known as "Larry the Liquidator" a rude and crude but brilliant fiscal cowboy who lassoes companies, brands them and carts them off for slaughter and profit.

When Larry sets his sights on the 81-year-old New England Wire and Cable Company, a family-owned operation run by Andrew Jorgenson (Gregory Peck), he has a fight on his hands against a man more interested in principles than money.

Complicating the takeover is Jorgenson's beautiful lawyer, Kate Sullivan (Penelope Ann Miller), who loves the game of high-stakes chance as much as Larry.

For Danny, it's another in a long line of sleazy characters, beginning in 1978 in the hit TV series *Taxi* as the dispatcher, Louie.

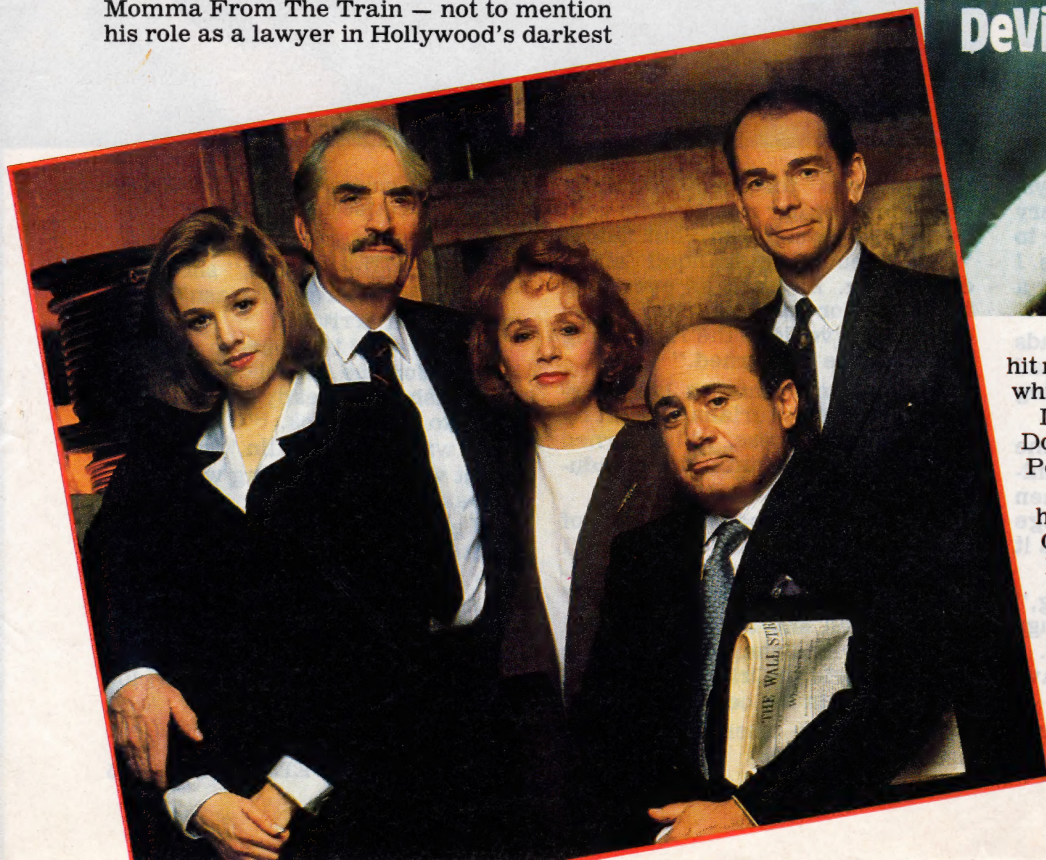
His film roles include Michael Douglas' scheming sidekick in *Romancing The Stone* and its sequel *Jewel Of The Nile*, a swindler in *Ruthless People*, a slimeball in *Twins*, a hustler in *Tin Men* and a maniac in *Throw Momma From The Train* — not to mention his role as a lawyer in Hollywood's darkest

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

'I LOVE MANIACAL GUYS!'

Larry the Liquidator is the latest in a line of sleazeballs played by Danny DeVito

● *Other People's Money* stars (from left) Penelope Ann Miller, Gregory Peck, Piper Laurie, Danny DeVito and Dean Jones.



hit movie of 1990, *War Of The Roses*, which he also directed.

Danny turned to his pal Michael Douglas when preparing for *Other People's Money*.

"Michael called me and said he'd heard good things about *Other People's Money* and I told him I'd done research on the picture," Danny says, chuckling. "He was expecting me to say I hung around Wall Street but I said, 'Yeah, I watched you in *Wall Street* (Michael's Oscar-winning film) a lot!'"

THESE



● Danny DeVito (inset, in a scene from his new movie) . . .
"I like to think of myself as a romantic guy."

Danny is not defensive about playing another sleazy character.

"Are you kidding? I love this guy," he says with enthusiasm. "I love these kind of maniacal guys who are ruthless. I also got a chance to show other sides and other colors, romantic colors and the poetic side of me, and the music lover, which never come across in other roles."

Unlike his money-driven character in *Other People's Money*, Danny's first priority will always be Rhea and their

children, Lucy, 7, Tracey, 5 and Jacob, 3.

"If I thought I was going to lose my career or my wife and kids, I would definitely not go toward the work," he says.

"It's a different thing to Larry. I try to keep all the movies in town and I get home to put the kids to bed. If I don't see them in the morning, I see them at night.

"Rhea does the same thing. She's working on *Cheers* and she has the kids come down to the set during the day, and she's home every night. What I do is usually pass up all the frou-frou and I just work.

"Unless Arnold Schwarzenegger wants me to introduce him at an awards ceremony, or something like that, you don't see me and Rhea out. Usually we're at home with the kids and I only take the tuxedo out once or twice a year, thank God!"

Lately, however, Danny is spending more and more time at work.

He recently completed the poignant comedy *Jack The Bear*, is now filming his role as the Penguin in the *Batman* sequel and is about to direct Jack Nicholson in the movie *Hoffa*, written by David Mamet.

One of Hollywood's busiest actors, Danny reluctantly admits to a new problem with stardom — a weight gain.

"I gained 18 pounds doing *War Of The Roses*, but that was being the director — you can drink all the cappuccino you want and eat anything you want!

"When I saw *Other People's Money* on stage, my first thought was not 'How do you translate this to the screen' or 'How do I get the part', it was 'How much weight am I going to gain doing this movie?'

"I pass up food on all the movie sets and don't want to go near any of the goodies.

"But then I get up on the set of this one and sit at my desk and a prop person would put a box of donuts in front of me that I'm supposed to eat through every scene. I'd say, 'You son of a bitch, wait until we shoot to put them in front of me!' because I'd eat them all before the director even said 'action'."

*From Jenny Cooney
in Los Angeles*

